

Message Text

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PAGE 01 PARIS 01811 192144Z
ACTION EB-08

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 IO-14 ISO-00 AGRE-00 CEA-01 CIAE-00
COME-00 DODE-00 FRB-01 H-02 INR-07 INT-05 L-03
LAB-04 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-02 CTME-00 AID-05 SS-15
STR-06 ITC-01 TRSE-00 USIA-15 PRS-01 SP-02 SOE-02
OMB-01 DOE-11 /124 W
-----066933 201135Z /10

R 192120Z JAN 78
FM AMEMBASSY PARIS
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4527
INFO ALL EC CAPITALS
USMISSION GENEVA

UNCLAS PARIS 1811

USMTN

USEEC

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: ETRD FR
SUBJECT: FRENCH TRADE MINISTER COMMENTS ON MTN

1. LES ECHOS, JANUARY 17, CARRIED AN INTERVIEW WITH
TRADE MINISTER ANDRE ROSSI CONCERNING MTN. THE REPORTER
TRIED TO INDUCE ROSSI INTO CRITICISM OF U.S. POLICY AND
TO DOWNGRADE IMPORTANCE OF MTN. THESE EFFORTS FAILED,
HOWEVER, AND ROSSI DEFENDED SOLID POSITIONS, FAIRLY
EXPRESSED. A SUMMARY OF THE MAIN POINTS FOLLOWS:

2. ROSSI SAID JANUARY 17 SIGNIFIES SUBSTANTIAL PROGRESS
IN MTN, HE RECONFIRMED THAT CAP NOT NEGOTIABLE, AND
NOTED A CHANGE IN THE AMERICAN POSITION REGARDING
SELECTIVITY IN SAFEGUARDS AND ACCEPTANCE OF A NEW
CUSTOMS VALUATION CODE. HE SAID HE HAD TOLD AMBASSADOR
STRAUSS THAT FRENCH PARTICIPATION IN NEGOTIATING TARIFF
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REDUCTIONS IS CONDITIONAL ON CONFIRMATION OF THAT
CHANGE. ROSSI STRESSED THE GREATER RELATIVE IMPORTANCE
FOR FRANCE OF REDUCED NON TARIFF BARRIERS AS COMPARED
WITH TARIFF REDUCTIONS. ONLY AT THE VERY END OF THE
NEGOTIATIONS WILL FRANCE BE ABLE TO JUDGE WHETHER THE
TOTAL PACKAGE IS ACCEPTABLE. (HERE ROSSI REFUSED TO
SPECULATE THAT FRANCE MIGHT REQUEST THE EC AT SOME POINT

TO WITHDRAW FROM NEGOTIATIONS.) HE INSISTED FRANCE
WANTS THE MTN TO SUCCEED. ROSSI SAID ONE MUST PROTECT
TRADE CONCESSIONS MADE BY THE EC TO LOME COUNTRIES,
THUS THERE IS A THRESHOLD LEVEL OF CUSTOMS DUTIES WHICH
CANNOT BE REDUCED SO AS TO PRESERVE A MARGIN OF PREFER-
ENCE FOR THOSE DEVELOPING COUNTRIES. ROSSI CHARACTERIZED
THE MTN AS OF CAPITAL IMPORTANCE FACED WITH RISING
PROTECTIONISM. THE MTN WILL RESULT IN GREATER DISCI-
PLINE AND MORE INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION ACCORDING TO
ROSSI AND THUS CONTRIBUTE TO GROWTH OF TRADE AND
MAINTENANCE OF FREE TRADE IN THE WORLD. HARTMAN

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NNN

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